

International Society of Adventist Minister's Wives

Shepherdess Journal



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Table of Contents

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2	Committed to God
5	Involved in the Mission
8	Responsibilities that are a Privilege
10	In the Arms of the Protector
13	Are you happy?
16	Reconstructed Lives Fulfilling the Mission
19	I Commit
20	The Pastor's Wife Mission
23	SIEMA Social



Dear Friend



When a marriage faces difficulties that attack its stability, driving the spouses to the point of considering a separation, marriage counselors tend to, among other things in these circumstances, use a very useful word: COMMITMENT.

Commitment means accepting obligations, being intentional with your words, and of course, sharing God's promises. Marriage counselors rely on spouses to recall promises made from the past that are also currently valid. These evocations contribute to the continuation and renewal of commitment for the relationship based on the love that initially united them in marriage.

Dear friends and colleagues who are a part of this age-old, but wonderful ministry, just like those spouses, we also need the revitalization of our friendship with God. We must rekindle the passion for the divine charge that has been placed in our hands. Today, more than ever, it is important for us to keep our love for our husband, children, and neighbor alive. Above all else, our mission is to maintain the commitment that we one day made to our Father in heaven active. We cannot discuss mission without also including commitment. The mission that is missing this ingredient lacks interest and becomes tedious. It ends up turning into mere formalism or empty professionalism, lacking in love and devotion for the salvation of others.

Only by tightly grasping on to the One and only Source of love, will we be able to live joyfully committed to this call. If you find your strength failing you, remember Paul's words in Philippians 2:13: "For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose."

Ellen White wrote the following words regarding commitment that I would like to share with you:

"The wife of a minister can do much if she will. If she possesses the spirit of self-sacrifice and has a love for souls, she can with him do almost an equal amount of good".

(Testimonies for The Church, Volume 1, p. 452).

This new five-year period provides an opportunity to live your life committed to the mission, experience the joy and delight that serving others produces, and also making our homes a place of blessing for our families and others. I challenge you to do as Mary did and close the short distance of separation between you and Jesus. Do it for your home, your church, and community; spreading the sweet fragrance of Christ's love and proclaiming His soon return with the assurance that you already have the victory.

Blessings and My Sincere Regards,

Cecilia Iglesias

A close-up photograph of a person's hand pointing their index finger to a specific line of text in an open book. The book's pages are filled with dense, small text, likely a legal or academic document. Overlaid on the left side of the image is the word "omitted" in a large, red, cursive script font. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting. The overall composition highlights the concept of something being left out or overlooked.

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pastor was surprised due to the fact that during my years at this Adventist university I was very involved in diverse activities, this had given him and everyone at this institution the impression that I was a baptized member of the church.

It is expected from a woman who joins herself in matrimony with a pastor to be a person that is committed to God and the mission of the church. That commitment should evoke interest and a fervent desire to work next to her husband in what God has entrusted them to do. If in contrast, a pastor's wife does not feel called or committed to work in harmony, for certain the ministry that was given to them as a couple will be affected.

The prophet Amos asks a question that could be very easily applied to this situation, “Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so? (Amos 3:3).” Therefore, it is necessary that the wife ensure her level of commitment with God is as important as it is for her husband. Her husband hopes to count on her, not so that she do the work that he has been assigned, but so that she be an unconditional support as they accomplish the mission together.

2

FEARS BEFORE COMMITMENT

It is possible that some pastors wives feel fear when faced with the demands of working for the church. On some occasions the commitment to serve God requires going to different places, moving to a city or town far away, having to leave a good job, leave behind friends and neighbors, or simply do as Abram did and leave your country and family

promises of companionship, wellness, and blessing that we find in His word, our commitment is reaffirmed and our fears dissipate because of the assurance we have of God's constant presence for what He has called us to accomplish for His children.

Remember that when God calls, He is reasonable and He will never require of us something that we cannot achieve with His help. If in accepting a commitment to service we only think of what we may gain

somewhat a half truth, because it is true that the one who receives payment for the work are their spouses, however, she is also part of the mission, whether she likes it or not. Only an individual who has not received personal blessings in their lives, or who can't identify the great and wonderful things God has done for them, is capable of saying that they have nothing to share in regards to all they have obtained from God. The simple fact that they are a part of the family of workers that God has as special messengers of His promises, is a sufficient motive to feel the burden of responsibility for the mission.

“Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?”

to follow God's will. Maybe the commitment requires that you work in a rural area where there aren't any good schools for your children; or in places where the weather is not so pleasant, and there is sparsity of many things your family is accustomed to having easy access to. All of these factors and many more not mentioned, generate a level of stress and fear that if not correctly addressed, can cause problems that affect the harmony and the well being of the pastoral family. For this reason, the necessary adjustments need to be made. However, trusting in God's

or lose, we are following the wrong path with erroneous motivations. For God, it is not about gaining or losing, but about service.

If the demands to ministerial commitment produce anxiety and fear, remember these words from the apostle Peter: “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7 NIV).”

HOW MUCH ARE YOU WILLING TO COMMIT TO GOD?

I have known minister's wives that maintain that the call is only for their husbands, and not theirs personally. This is

The position of the pastor's wife should not be treated as one of privilege due to her marital status to the pastor, but she should be recognized for her relationship with God.

As pastor's wife, when working for the ministry, we will not obtain a salary, but the blessing of participating in the most important company that belongs to the King of the universe: The Church.

If a pastor's wife were to ask, “How do you know you are committed enough to God?”, my reply would be: “Committed

to the point of feeling that what is being done is enough to repay how much God has done, is doing, and will continue to do for you and your family.”

The extent and dimension of the commitment will be determined by each person, according to their vision of what is most urgent and the scope of the given call by God to His people. However more recommendations can be added:

.....

*God will speak to you
and show you the work
He desires for you to do*

.....

- Serve God with your unique talents. We all have talents that are unique from which heaven has bestowed upon us, and the least we can do is utilize them for God's service and for the fulfillment of the mission.

- Don't let criticism intimidate you. When you are busy doing God's work, it is likely that you will be a target for those who, instead of doing their part to complete the mission, spend their time criticizing. Regardless, ignore the comments that don't contribute to your growth and spiritual strengthening, and pray for those who don't value the work being done or just criticize.

Find your niche in the church or in the community. Don't invade someone else's mission field. If you feel that you would like to work in an area of ministry that someone else already leads, offer your assistance. Try to be supportive, never an encumbrance.

- Take care of your devotional life. The more time you take to spend with God, the clearer and more defined the vision of your commitment will become. God will personally speak to you and show you the work he desires for you to do, giving you ideas on how to obtain your goals. Remember that God has never called anyone to fail. He always, along with the call, offers His guidance and promises of help and support.

When I reflect on all that God has done for me during the years I lent my services to the church, I come to the conclusion that the multitude of blessings always weighed in my favor. I can say with full assurance today, that the results of my commitment with God surpass my expectations. All that is needed is to surrender with a sincere and unconditional disposition and a profound conviction of commitment to service. Let us not forget that the reward for the completion of the work will be eternal life.

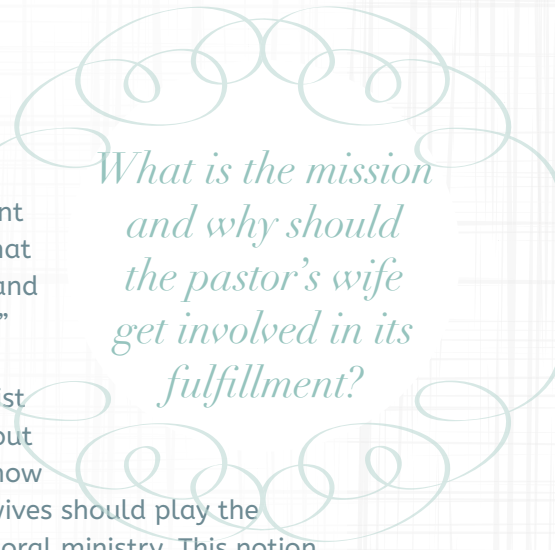
Evelyn Omaña. Wife, mother, and grandmother who enjoys spending time with family. Has created a website named "Women of Vision" to help and encourage Christian women.

Involved in the Mission

Jorge Rolando Atalido

The church always expects nothing but the best from their pastor: Inspiration, care and love, but above all his attention. There seems to be the following general characteristic found in all congregations: most of the members are women who need to be motivated and inspired, and often the pastor is not able to reach them; however, the pastor's wife on countless occasions and silently is used by the Lord to inspire that great army, which if willing, can and will result in blessings for the advancement of God's cause. It is undeniable that the pastor's wife plays a special role in the fulfillment of the mission.

What is the mission and why should the pastor's wife get involved in its fulfillment? Are they the domestic responsibilities she faithfully completes, the care of the children, her education, spiritual attention, and in some cases additionally, employment with a significant workload that needs to be timely met? The mission that the Lord gave to all who serve Him is, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations—(Matthew 28:19,20 NIV)."



*What is the mission
and why should
the pastor's wife
get involved in its
fulfillment?*

A few years ago, I was speaking with a brother in Christ who was of advanced age. He began complaining about the pastor's wife expressing that: "She doesn't know how to play the piano." His opinion was that all pastor's wives should play the piano. He considered this to be a prerequisite for pastoral ministry. This notion was one that was held for many years; many pastor's wives even took piano lessons in order to be able to play or at the very least be able to interpret hymns from the hymnal. Since music is not a talent that everyone possesses, some did were not successful in this area. These were notably good times: The pastor's wife actively participated in the worship service through music, performing or equipping choral groups for praise and worship during church services. Is it necessary that in today's day and age every pastor's wife be equipped to execute a musical instrument or organize musical groups and choirs? Certainly not. However, there is something that God has given to all, and it is the gift of the completion of the mission: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations."



The apostle Paul uses the body as a metaphor when referring to the spiritual gifts that each child of God receives from the Holy Spirit, he declared: “Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be (1 Cor. 12:14-18).”

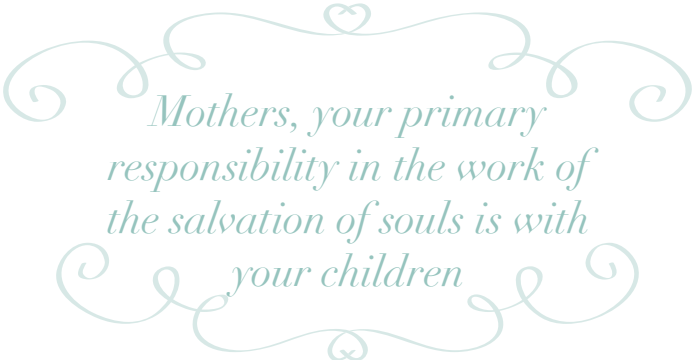
Each part of the body knows that its role is to build up the whole body. Similarly, each pastor's wife should know that her role is to ensure through her work that the mission be completed, not forgetting that the gift or gifts she possesses are “Just as he wanted them to be.” So her first task is to discover the “just as he wanted”; which gift did He bestow? What is her talent? When she becomes aware of that talent or the gift she possesses, it is also true that she is to acknowledge that the gift(s) or talent(s) are for the edification of the body of Christ. That being said, how should the pastor's wife participate in fulfilling the mission with her

husband and children? There are pastors' wives who are very good preachers and speakers, even doing so on Sabbath. It is a lofty and holy mission that the pastor's wife can engage in, but not all preach. Others are good at leading children's ministry and incorporating diverse ideas, thus providing a model for other brethren interested in ministry, but not sure how to contribute. Nevertheless, not all of the pastor's wives stand out in this ministry.

One thing is certain: One way or another, all have a gift given to them from heaven. Thank God for this because He has not left any human being devoid, whether man or woman, of a special gift. Each person manages their participation in different ways, just as each part of the body has its distinct functions, yet all contribute to its edification. This, either through the ministry of intercessory prayer, visiting those in need, helping the sick, motivating the discouraged, attending to the church edifice, by decorating, organizing, welcoming people at the door, greeting the church brethren and friends, telling the children's story, accompanying her husband during home visitations, giving Bible studies, participating in small groups. Many are the ways in which she may become involved and feel good about herself and others, because

Paul said it well when he stated: “Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers. (1 Timothy 4:16).”

For those that are mothers, their primary responsibility in the work of the salvation of souls is with her children; whether they be young, pre-teens, or teenagers, they are the immediate focus of her attention.



*Mothers, your primary
responsibility in the work of
the salvation of souls is with
your children*

Standing by her husband’s side is another opportunity to serve, supporting him during times when he finds himself discouraged or depressed, praying for him and with him; and if possible accompanying him to do visitations. But above all, be his companion, friend, and confidant. Helping him when he finds himself facing times of trial, providing words of encouragement to continue fighting for the salvation of souls. Ellen White states: “I saw that the wives of the ministers should help their husbands in their labors and be exact and careful what influence they exert, for they are watched, and more is expected of them than of others. Their dress should be an example. Their lives and conversation should be an example, savoring of life rather than of death”. (The Adventist Home, p. 355).

As mentioned above, it is undeniable that the pastor’s wife’s level of responsibility compared to those that surround her is not considered equal to that of the rest of the church’s sisters, since she is a central figure. Her performance should not be driven by the eyes that watch her, but by a higher motive: salvation. She is to consider every moment an opportunity to live the Christian life and enjoy the peace that the Lord offers.

No single pattern exists in the way in which we are to attend to the divine mandate, but one thing is certain, God has given you talents. Use them to grow, don’t hide them. Discover them, believe that you possess them, don’t bury them, and don’t worry about who will see them, that should not be your intention. Instead, convert those talents into blessings for all who are in search of hope, consolation, encouragement, support, and embrace them. Without a doubt, the pastor’s wife is chosen by God to accompany Him in the fulfillment of a great work whose main purpose is to save souls and prepare them for the kingdom of heaven. It is a task with eternal results. Only when we are living in eternity will we be able to see the results of such a loving work directed towards the souls that Jesus died for. It is a glorious mission that does not compare to any profession. You can participate in this joy.

Pastor Jorge Rolando Atalido
President of South Eastern Venezuelan Association.

Responsibilities that are a privilege

Silvia de Hernández



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My name is Silvia, I have been a pastor's wife for 35 years and our time together seems to have gone by so fast. God has blessed us with two children, Jonathan and Keren. Keren, is now married with her husband Magdiel. I would like to share some of the experiences with you in my walk in the ministerial life.

For me, being committed to the mission means deeply adhering to it through a covenant of love and fidelity with God, my husband, and ministry. Becoming fully aware of the shared ministerial mission, with its various responsibilities is a process that takes time.

The first responsibility that I learned working with my husband in this ministry, was to believe in the call. Just like Abraham and Sarah, who left to an unknown land that only God would reveal to them, my

husband and I have labored in more than seven locations, in the South and also the North of Mexico, where we currently work. Each period of time spent in the different places we have lived have been distinct, between four to eight years. However, in each location, God has shown us His guidance and the certainty of His calling.

The second task I learned was to transform myself into an agent for change. Although extremely challenging, there is no greater influence we can have over others than living daily according to the Gospel we preach. For this reason, I recommend that you be yourself, authentic and honest. Don't pretend to be anyone else. In my profession as a psychologist, and after completing a master's degree in guidance counseling, I always recommend that people respond in their psychometric assessments by stating who they

really are and not who they want to be, because such responses affect the validity of the results. This recommendation also applies to life in ministry. Accept that in your imperfection, God fine tunes you for the mission, and He never errors. You were chosen to serve Him. It's possible that the scope of your testimony may not be apparent until long after initiating your experience with God, that is why it's best that you enjoy your life, family, and your job. Never conform and always look to be an agent of change in your community.

The third and great task is of leading a ministry among the diversity of people, places, and cultures. The experience gained when traveling to different places, like having to deal with so many different people, their way of living and thinking, is so enriching that few things compare to those multicultural encounters. In particular I

*“Never be lacking in zeal,
but keep your spiritual fervor,
serving the Lord ”*

Romans 12:11

remember our first church, in a village called Cosoleacaque, which is located in the south of my country, in the state of Veracruz, Mexico, where at that time most people spoke the language “Nahuatl”. I learned with that congregation that although I had lived, grown, and prepared myself academically in a city, I was not there to change people, but to allow God to work through His Holy Spirit and let me be a real support for my husband, and at the same time to serve the community in which he ministered. There I became sort of an apprentice, an “temachtilli,” a Nahuatl word which means “student.”

Lastly, I feel I have an important responsibility in cultivating faith, even amidst the pain and storms of life. Those that believe that because they are part of ministry they will not suffer grave problems, life’s assaults, or dangers is mistaken. The reality is that in ministry we see a lot, and sometimes up close. When faced with these difficulties, it’s good to remember that when we come out of the storm unscathed or have managed to overcome a severe test of faith, we develop what is known as resilience, in

other words, the human capacity to face extreme situations with flexibility and learn to conquer them. This ability allows us to be restored and transformed into better persons, learn from our mistakes, and proves that God will never abandon us. The most promising part of this task, is that we must persistently ask for it in order to intentionally cultivate our faith, a faith that comes directly from God and who provides it freely.

My husband was at the brink of death due to cancer. You probably agree with me when I say that just the name of this illness instills fear. In our experience, the best therapy was to hold on to the Lord through serving Him. Amidst these circumstances I was able to see in my husband a man who sincerely believed that there was nothing to fear, deciding not to quit proclaiming the message of the Gospel. Because of this attitude, I followed him and stood firm as if clinging to a rock. We then experienced the wonderful blessing of hearing the physician say that everything was fine. God had worked a miracle, like so many we had seen or heard of throughout the course of our ministry.

You who have embraced this noble mission, allow me to leave you with this simple prayer: Father, help me shine with your glory before my peers. May the love I have professed gleam in each church that you call my family to. Thank you Father for the privilege of being part of the large family of those who serve in ministry, whose mission is to guide each believer to live an experience of transformation in Christ and a personal relationship with Him. That we may train them to be disciples that go and share the gospel to all they come in contact with.

Blessings to you.

Silvia Gómez de Hernández. Pastor’s Wife.
Enjoys learning and supporting different activities in the church. Silva writes to us from the Northern Mexican Union.



In the Arms of the Protector

María del Rosario Castro de Hernández

My dear friend, I imagine that you are familiar with that painting where Jesus is holding a small lamb. The tiny animal appears safe and protected, resting in the arms of its shepherd. As long as it remains there, it will be safe, nothing will be able to harm it. The lamb won't even feel cold because of the shepherd's warm embrace.

It is curious that sheep have serious difficulties with directions, are fragile, and sometimes stubborn. They are animals that are easily distracted and are not able to be alert to the presence of an enemy. Therefore, they are highly vulnerable to attacks from predators, and need the care of a sharp-eyed pastor. Otherwise, their lives are in danger.

When the author of Psalm 23 identifies the Lord as our shepherd, we can do nothing more than to recognize that we are like lambs. Some are brave, others stubborn; there is no lack of rebellious ones, the fragile ones, the broken. There are also sheep who are tender, generous, hardworking, have solidarity, in the end, the variety is vast. However, all without exception share one reality: They are sick, even if they are healthy. The virus of sin is present and makes them vulnerable, disoriented, and clumsy. Fortunately, His word guarantees that Jesus is still the Shepherd and with Him, "I shall not want."

God has entrusted to every human being a lofty mission, so lofty and vital that it can determine life or death for those that surround us: Share the Gospel. Once we realize the urgency of this work, we ponder on those human traits that make completing the mission difficult. Do we tend to be disoriented? The human race has shown time and time again throughout history how easily it loses its course. Mankind loses his Shepherd and wanders lost amidst the weeds of sin, exposing himself rashly to predators. We too are fragile in our way of thinking and our self-esteem. It only takes a few thoughtless words, possibly intentionally spoken, to crush the most precious desires. Furthermore, the simple fact that we carry the seed of sin in our very being, makes us easy prey for the enemy. Why does the Lord place upon us such a monumental task? Crazy and ignorant people (Deuteronomy 32:6), fallen race, rebellious human beings, blind, stubborn...the list of defects could be never ending; despite it all, no one else will do what corresponds to us. Even with our fallen nature, we have been called during this critical time of history. It is not an optional task, it is our responsibility. Faced with this challenge, the attitude of each Christian can vary: Acceptance: If only an attitude of worship and obedience to our Creator were a physiological necessity and waking up in the morning would bring about an urgency in us to kneel and pray, or worshipping God would be as imperative as drinking water, everything would most likely be simpler.

When the work is undertaken with passion, it implicitly produces a certain level of success, since giving of our best efforts provokes satisfaction and draws a smile on our face.



God in His love, however, did not make robots out of His children, ensuring their obedience. He expects each one to naturally develop a joy in sharing the Gospel, serving Him and serving others. When the work is undertaken with passion, it implicitly produces a certain level of success (Regardless of the results), since giving of our best efforts provokes satisfaction and draws a smile on our face. Working with joy doesn't mean that there won't be tears, sweat, and physical or emotional deterioration, but it does mean that there won't be a need to hide your face in embarrassment - for not having done all that is possible - when the time comes to answer for what we are accountable for to our judge and lawyer, Jesus Christ.

Indifference: It is true that there will always be someone to do the work that is necessary, but that fact does not justify saying yes to committing to

the mission as an easy means of avoiding the pressures. Like what happened to the man who had two sons; approaching the firstborn, he said: Son, go work today in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented and went. And he came to the second and said the same; And he answered and said: Yes, sir, I will. Which of the two did the will of his father? (Matthew 21:28 - 31). Often we act like rebellious children, hidden behind feelings of incapacity, laziness, conformism, among other justifications. They become a shell of resignation and comfort.

Courage: Acting with courage amidst the challenges faced in the mission, implies recognizing limitations and weaknesses, yet regardless, advancing in the name of the Lord. Just like David challenged the giant, knowing that the odds were not in his favor. It is to embrace the mission with the mixture of

emotions that make the weak strong; the ignorant wise; the insecure safe, and the coward brave. It means to hold on to the "here I am, send me" as your theme, with the conviction that all that is lacking God shall supply, and that any deficiency the Almighty will transform, converting it into a useful gift. Courage is to change doubts into trust, to move forward even in the midst of adversity.

Remittance: Dear pastors wife, look at you! You are part of the flock, at the mercy of the wolves. You are weak, disoriented, and fearful, but you hold a great responsibility. Those eyes that are focused on your person, scrutinizing, pending your success or failure at fulfilling the task; they are looks that can intimidate, knowing that they hold within them high expectations and that reaching those expectations is



impossible. Only is it palpable when we rely on Divine providence, accepting a shared ministry of immense performance. It is a position in which the blessings are savored and the responsibility magnified.

Look at you! Exposed to judgment and the demands of an imperfect church, that in its search for guidance, does not hesitate to place a wide range of expectations on its leaders, quickly labeling them based on their accomplishments, not their struggles. As in a showcase of probability, through models that impress not only the sight, but also the hearts of those who draw near in search of someone to imitate. They feel so disoriented and exposed to evil, they yearn for an example to be able to reproduce in their lives.

Look at you! Protected by the strong arms of the Shepherd, resting upon His lap. In that perfect place where you can regain your strength and trust, in those permanently open arms of refuge where you can deposit all those emotions that you wish would go unnoticed and pour them out in silence. There will be times when trembling, feeling defeated, scared and confused, you come to the arms that will embrace you until you find yourself. Once recharged and calm, you will continue the work, confronting the daily ups and downs, inviting others to come find help in the secure arms of the Shepherd. “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God (Isaiah 41:10),” is the voice that whispers in your ear to bring peace, to infuse you with life, encourage you and confirm the call. The Shepherd knows His sheep, He also knows their weaknesses and their abilities. He has placed you on a platform of service, knowing what you are capable of. Do your part! Fulfill your mission and be a blessing for your church!



Mtra. María del Rosario Castro Márquez. Serves as director of Children's Ministries, Shepherdess Ministries and SIEMA in the South Pacific Association of the Mexican Inter-oceanic Union.

Are You Happy?

Yaqueline Tello



Licci Zemledich

There once was a woman who dressed up like a clown in order to liven up a children's party. She had a very unique talent, able to make children and adults laugh continuously during her thirty minute show. She seemed to have a peculiar grace about her that went beyond the colored clothing, huge shoes, heavy makeup, large wig, and bright ball of a nose. Not only did she make others laugh, but also made it seem that each prize won during the contests and games was the greatest, although it may only have been a simple plastic ball.

Upon completing one of her shows, a mother of one of the children present couldn't resist the temptation of approaching and congratulating her on her work. But before this could happen the woman dressed as a clown quickly escaped toward the restroom. The mother waited a little while and then proceeded to enter to say hello. To her surprise she saw the woman dressed like a clown grasping a telephone and inconsolably crying. This show looked nothing like the one performed outside in front of all the children. The woman now standing there was dressed in colored clothing,

with a bright spongy wig, missing the round nose, and a painted smile that trickled with the rhythm of her tears. She seemed to be the most unhappy woman in the world.

The woman observed this scene in shock, slowly she approached the clown, asking if she could help. The woman dressed like a clown, in between sobs, responded by apologizing for the uncomfortable situation, but she simply was not happy. Her personal problems were so great that even making children laugh seemed pointless to her. The poses, the gestures, and each word that she spoke during her successful show, had been learned by memory and were repeated in each presentation, yet they did not amuse her, nothing could make her happy. It's likely that this woman's problems were not as complicated as she perceived, but for certain she believed herself to be unhappy.

Don't you think that any of us could be this woman? How many times have you left your house Sabbath morning, on days that there is church service, special events, wearing the perfect



Daria Zemleduch

mask to serve in church or to help church members, or support your husband? Clothes, shoes, hairstyle, maybe a little makeup, and a smile you practiced in front of the mirror after drying your tears, with the intention of not letting anyone notice what is in your heart? If they saw you without the mask on, they would discover that inside is an enormous and profound emptiness that make you believe that there are so many reasons for you not to be happy. The performance that you already learned by memory and have practiced time and time again has worked in front of the church members. It pulls you with its string and the only thing that motivates and convinces you that it is worth it, is the simply fact that thanks to this performance your needs can be met; such as food, clothing, and even traveling with your family. So then you go perform in the show, helping your husband, leading, giving classes, delivering a presentation, organizing an event, helping a sister, attending to visitors, smiling to the children, but as soon as you get home the mask is taken off and reality sets in with its loud voice saying, “Honey, I’m sorry to say you are

not happy...you weren’t born to be happy, because if your were.” Stop for a moment. Are you happy?

The question is not, do you feel happy, because happiness is not a feeling. You can’t depend on how you feel, because it would only take a menstrual cramp, a cloudy day, rainy day or extremely sunny day for you to

Honey, I’m sorry to say you are not happy...you weren’t born to be happy

stop feeling happy. The question also isn’t if someone makes you happy, since happiness is not an object that someone can produce for us, hence, don’t expect someone else to make you happy. You could spend years waiting for your husband to learn how to make you happy, and yet still feel an emptiness in your heart. Your family can try to do all that is within their reach, the church members can be attentive to your needs and offer their affection, the administration that oversees your area of service in ministry could

allocate part of the budget for your family and you to enjoy an all inclusive trip , yet you still remain unhappy. You may even spend a delightful moment of joy with those that surround you, but that doesn’t mean that they will make you happy. This is because no human being has been granted the ability to create the happiness you need. Happiness does not come from an activity, or the number of successes in life , an academic degree , nor does the ministry give it either. No activity has the power to make you happy.

If happiness is not a feeling, or a mood, nor is it anything that someone or something can give you, then what is it? Happiness is a lifestyle that God, our Creator, designed for you. It is a divine invention. God placed inside you a heart that was designed for Him to deposit the perfect dosage of happiness in you. The problem is that we strive to fill that emptiness with a ton of things that hinder God’s original design for our happiness. The shelves of many women’s hearts are filled with complaints against their husband, the church, and much more. Happiness can’t exist when there is constant

*What is your situation?
If there is something that you hide
in your heart that is preventing
you to live in happiness*

complaining. Other women have their hearts full with the opinions of others. They care so much about what others think that they forget to be happy. There are also women who love violence, and consider a good day to be one in which they were able to teach someone a harsh lesson, and they forget that happiness cannot abide with the presence of violence. There are those that have their hearts filled with resentment, and God cannot find a single slot to deposit happiness into. Another group of women have allowed fear to pollute and reproduce in each corner of their hearts, so much so that divine happiness cannot fit, because in the list of fears and apprehensions, the fear of happiness is included. The happiness bestowed by God requires an exclusive spot.

What is your situation? If there is something that you hide in your heart that is preventing you to live in happiness, and of course enjoy this ministry; just like the author of Proverbs states, it is drying your bones, don't you think that it is time to get rid and dispose of it? No matter how beautiful your mask, it's not the best way to commit to the mission which God has entrusted you. God does not ask of you to stand in front of others in ministry and wear a mask, hiding behind a heart filled with complaints, opinions, violence, resentment, or fears. If this were so, then He would not be the God of eternal love and mercy. God asks that you get rid of those masks because He knows your level of unhappiness and there is nothing you can hide from Him. God is waiting for you to stop depending on your feelings, your reasoning, and what others can or cannot offer you. He is waiting for you to rely on Him, because He has

the source of happiness in His hands. He wants you to give Him your heart so that He may work a miracle of happiness inside you and you can say, just like King David did: "Fill my heart with joy when their grain and new wine abound (Psalm 4:7 NIV)."

From this day forward, don't ask if you feel happy, if someone or something makes you happy, but ask how much are you depending on the source of living water, which is overflowing and at your complete disposition.

"So Israel will live in safety; Jacob will dwell[a] secure in a land of grain and new wine, where the heavens drop dew. Blessed are you, Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD... (Deuteronomy 33:28-29 NIV)."

Yaqueline Tello. Writes to us from Chiapas, Mexico.



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Reconstructed Lives

Cesia Alvarado Zemleduch

Life is not always how we hoped it would be. Some people would like to accomplish the impossible and start from the beginning in order to change things they did not like!! There have also been times where we all would like to cease our existence due to traumatic experiences that shook our stability, and submerged us in terrible and insurmountable problems.

When describing our condition, Isaiah signals: "Yet you, LORD, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter, we are all the work of your hand (Isaiah 64:8)." We are jars made of clay, formed by the divine Potter, Nevertheless, because of the unbearable pain of living in this world, we can become "broken."

*Fissures that begin
tiny and eventually
break jars.*

Fissures that begin tiny and eventually break jars. Such as, Mom and Dad didn't want me because they were teenagers, Dad would come home drunk and beat my mother. Unfaithfulness, or having been sexually abused as a child. As a child you only heard the words stupid, dumb, idiot, you aren't good for anything, among others. You had an authoritative parent.

You lived in a legalistic environment that led you to perceive God as a tyrant who punishes. Mom or Dad abandoned you when you were little. You lost a son or daughter to an illness or an accident. You witnessed your

son or loved one committing suicide. You were a victim of a kidnapping. A victim of psychological violence. You witnessed your parents divorce. An incurable illnesses was detected in you. Your son

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or daughter have fallen prey to addictions.

I could mention many more things, however, because we are made of clay, each wound infringed upon our jar causes it to break.

During one of the darkest times of his life, David wrote: LORD, you are the God who saves me; day and night I cry out to you. May my prayer come before you; turn your ear to my cry. I am overwhelmed with troubles and my life draws near to death (Psalm 88:1-3).” When I read these verses, I thought about David’s pain; his jar was already spread into pieces on the floor of sadness and desolation because he wished death upon himself! He considered his life to be miserable due to Saul’s persecution, and his thinking was logical.

In order to understand him, we must comprehend the way in which God created us. He knows us better than we know ourselves. The Psychologists who study human nature have found certain truths about humanity, but the wonderful God who created us knows every meticulous detail about each aspect of our existence. If something is not going well,

God clearly knows the origin of the problem and He has the capacity to fix it, if we allow Him to. If a car isn’t working right, we can take it to a mechanic or body shop that knows its craft well, and has the capacity to fix the damaged parts. However, if the car has a serious problem, it must be sent to the manufacturer who built it. Those who manufactured the vehicle have a better understanding of its structure and each of its parts, and they would know best how to make it function properly again. In this same manner, God knows us, and wants to “fix” our lives.

In Luke 4:18,19, and 21, Jesus says: “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

Jesus came to heal the brokenhearted and free the captives, including those captive to their own wounds. Christ came to give us freedom! What a beautiful promise!

Psalm 147:3 says: “He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.” God does not punish us when we are wounded; He heals us! In the book of Isaiah 53:4-5 it states: “Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.” Healed! What a thrill to know this! Not only healed of our physical illnesses, but also emotional illnesses. God came to give us emotional healing too.

I attended mental health therapy for two and a half years. I had been a woman that had inflicted emotional self harm, and thought little of myself. I felt ugly, had no self-worth, or desire to live. At that time, a woman who had overcome and forgiven her abuser, and was now emotionally healthy, told me that I should share my story of emotional healing with other women. I shook in fear at this. How could I, the pastor’s wife, speak about my mental health? How could I admit that I had been sexually abused as a

child? They will laugh at me! They will doubt my faith, criticize me for having participated in mental health therapy. What will they say about a pastor's wife who had attempted suicide? Many questions flew through my mind as my psychologist suggested I share my story with others.

I have learned throughout my life that Jesus also heals our emotional wounds because the psychological structure is an essential part of our human nature. It is mentioned very few times that Jesus also came to heal our psychological weaknesses. Such healing is almost always sought out by us from psychologists or psychiatrists, who don't know Christ as their personal Savior. Christ came to heal all the dimensions of our being, including our minds.

In James 5:14-16, it not only discusses the sick that will be healed or the sins that will be forgiven; it also tells us that we should confess our offenses to each other, and pray for one another so we can find healing.

There are basic human needs that must be met during our childhood. If this does not occur, many difficulties will result upon reaching adulthood. The jars of our lives will begin to accumulate fissures until breaking. What are those needs that upon being met make it so that children develop normally without wounds? We have primary basic needs, such as food, air, water, warmth, etcetera. Without these things we would not survive. There are other needs that we label as secondary. The following are four of them: Love, forgiveness, praise, and protection. If these needs are not met in children, they develop with an inferiority complex. They are the product of not receiving love, forgiveness, protection, and praise in a suitable manner. Some of us have a very strong inferiority complex. Some of them are: Isolation, seeking attention, easily influenced, possessive, perfectionism, criticizing others, showing off, always trying to compensate, among other things.

I would like to ask you today dear friend and companion, how is your jar of clay that was formed by the divine Potter's hands in your mother's womb? Is it broken? Does it have fissures? I invite you to sit and reflect on your life. Allow Jesus to repair your jar and consequently others will be able to see His glory upon noticing your restored jar. You will fulfill your mission.

Cesia Alvarado Zemleduch. Baja California region in Mexico. Leads her ministry called, "Heart to Heart," helping women who have been sexually, physically, and emotionally abused. Also, women who suffer from addiction, anxiety, depression, and survivors of suicide. She is married to: Pastor Edgar Sánchez Vásquez, Evangelist for the Baja California region.

I Commit



How wonderful and astonishing it is to discover God's design for your life! Personally, I never imagined becoming a pastor's wife. Nevertheless, by divine providence I met a man with a deep gaze, who made bold decisions and I fell in love!

Our first years as a married couple were spent living far away from our families, trying to strengthen our marriage and secure our ministry. Although I grew up in an Adventist home, it would have been difficult to foresee me jumping from village to village, preaching, singing, telling stories to underprivileged children; that I would have to arrive at people's homes during dark and unsafe hours of the night. I confess that starting from zero was hard for me, however, my motivation was genuine; I desired to work with fervor and devotion. Sixteen years have passed since the Lord called me to do this wonderful work. Despite the time passed, I ask myself: What am I missing? Or What is needed for us to completely commit to this mission?

My history with God has had moments of satisfaction, but also of sadness. An example can easily be those times when you have been filled with the conviction to use all within your power, your will, and even monetary means, but then you notice that the level of commitment of those surrounding you is minimal, ultimately produces discouragement in you. It is sad to encounter fellow pastor's wives that complete the duties of this unpaid labor, only to say they are carrying out the work, or so that no one can talk badly about them or their husbands. The question is: Am I truly committed to God? Am I giving my best for His cause? Do I seek to work to fulfill the given mandate?

This reminds me of Queen Esther's story, a woman who was filled with outstanding qualities. She was connected to God through fasting and prayer, brimming with tact and subtleness; humble, yet elegant, willing to do anything in order to reclaim

God's protection for her people. Without a doubt, Esther was a woman to admire. What's even more surprising is that her extraordinary beauty did not fill her with arrogance, but instead she used her physical gifts to fulfill a greater purpose, an eternal one. Sister White also inquired, how can we fulfill our mission? "Christ's representatives will be in daily communion with Him. Their words will be select, their speech seasoned with grace, their hearts filled with love, their efforts sincere, earnest, persevering, to save souls for whom Christ has died". (Daughter of God, p. 88).

Could each one of us say that we are courageous and beautiful queens who are willing to lose our life, if necessary, to fulfill the mission? Without a doubt, Esther understood the real meaning of commitment and the responsibility of carrying out her call by utilizing her best qualities to lift up the name of God.

We must refuse to stay paralyzed and immobile today. Let us avoid being influenced by the indifference that has overtaken some of our sisters in ministry. If this is your situation, let us sing today then...."I am happy, happy...I am happy with my Lord." So that we can truly be passionate about telling others about Jesus; that we may rejoice in this work, because we want to please Him by bringing to fruition the plans and projects that our church has. This way many will come to know Him.

Each one of us should do the most to contribute to the salvation of children, elderly women, and young people. Then with joy we will be able to hear Jesus saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness! (Matthew 25:21 NIV)."

Our example and motivation, dear friends and sisters, is "Jesus took upon Himself our nature, laid aside His glory, majesty, and riches to perform his mission, to save that which was lost. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister unto other". (Testimonies for the Church, Vol.2, p. 426).

Let us cultivate Esther's qualities in our life, and encourage other girl friends in ministry to accept this eternally transcendent commitment. May our resolution for today be, "I commit!"

Yeimmy Ayala de Preciado. Southern Association of Bogotá.
Southern Colombian Union.

The Pastor's Wife Mission

Teófilo A. Silvestre

While true that the pastor holds a huge responsibility in his hands, it is also true that his wife does not have it any easier. In all honesty, the pastor's work would be incomplete without the opportune help of his wife. Thus the pastor's wife plays a very vital role in fulfilling the mission of the Seventh-Day Adventist church.

How can the pastor's wife cooperate in order for the mission of the church to be met? This is an important question because God, her husband, children, and the church have high expectations for her. How can she deal with all of this and make good? What are some of the different scenarios in

which the pastor's wife should execute the mission entrusted? The Bible's instruction is clear: Matthew 28:18-20, Emphasizes Christ's authority. Mark 16:16, Presents the reality of a coming judgement. Luke 24:44-47, Confirms the certainty of the fulfillment of prophecy. John 20:19-21, Teaches the method to be used to fulfill the mission. Acts 1:8, Focuses on the universality of the gospel. Revelation 14:6-12, Confirms the role of the mission in the context of the battle between good and evil; this being an Adventist perspective.

Fulfillment of the mission is not a matter of convenience, an option, or a recommendation.

The mission is a matter of simple obedience to divine instruction. Not fulfilling the mission that God has given means disobeying a commandment that is just as important as those found in Exodus 20. Sadly, in many places the Great Commission has been changed to the Great Omission or the Great Suggestion; and that is why you will notice that the mission receives more mention due to its unfulfillment than by keeping it in proper perspective. But that can change!

Each pastor's wife has been called to be a missionary, and this can only be achieved when the gifts that God has given

The wife of a minister can do much if she will. If she possesses the spirit of self-sacrifice and has a love for souls, she can with him do almost an equal amount of good

you are utilized “A responsibility rests upon the minister’s wife which she should not and cannot lightly throw off. God will require the talent lent her, with usury. She should work earnestly, faithfully, and unitedly with her husband to save souls”. (Evangelism, p. 674).

In the great scheme of the divine call, you cannot be just a passive spectator, but instead, you are to be an individual who is active in the salvation of lives for Christ.

There is a story of a passenger who bought a first class ticket on a bus. When he entered the bus, the driver told him to have a seat wherever he liked. Buying a first class ticket should provide certain privileges, but the passenger did not notice them. During the trip, the bus broke down. It was then that the passenger understood. The driver said, “All third class passengers, push the bus! Second class, get down and observe them, and first class passengers just stay seated inside the bus. What type of passenger are you at church? A few are doing the work, while others just watch, and some stay seated. As a pastor’s wife, you can do a lot to expand the work of the church and bear fruit hundredfold. The pastor cannot do it alone, together you can go farther. You can be like Aquila and Priscilla, who were a wonderful missionary couple (Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Romans 16:3, 1 Corinthians 16:19).

“The wife of a minister can do much if she will. If she possesses the spirit of self-sacrifice and has a love for souls, she can with him do almost an equal amount of good. A sister laborer in the cause of truth can understand and reach some cases, especially among the sisters, that the minister cannot”. (Evangelism, p. 675).

Your influence in the fulfillment of the mission is limitless; you can be a positive influence to people that the pastor cannot even reach.

WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN HELP FULFILL THE MISSION

1. The home as a mission field. The first place where the mission is to be completed is the home, since you are already preparing people for this life and the next.

“Let the minister’s wife who has children remember that in her home she has a missionary field in which she should labor with untiring energy and unflagging zeal, knowing that the results of her work will endure throughout eternity. She is to allow nothing to divert her from her mission, the recording angel writes her name as one of the greatest missionaries in the world”. (Evangelism, ps. 676, 677).

2. Try to have a home church for your children to worship at. This is a very delicate subject, since the church members like to see the pastoral family together. But when the pastor has more than one church, as is common, the danger exists that because our children do not experience a consistent church life, they will not develop and grow within the church like a normal child. I believe that this could even affect their spiritual life and gifts. I advise that while you can, keep your children in one church to worship. This too will help you, as a mother, to grow.

3. Accompany your husband when possible. Ellen White states: “She should have a united interest with him to do good. She should be willing to accompany her husband, if home cares do not hinder, and she should aid him in his efforts to save

The wife of a minister of the gospel can be either a most successful helper and a great blessing to her husband or a hindrance to him in his work.

souls. With meekness and humility, yet with a noble self-reliance, she should have a leading influence upon minds around her, and should act her part and bear her cross and burden in meeting, and around the family altar, and in conversation at the fireside. The people expect this, and they have a right to expect it. If these expectations are not realized, the husband's influence is more than half destroyed". (Evangelism, p. 675).

As you may have noticed, your support is key in the success of the fulfillment of the mission for your husband. This also requires for you to be a part of the fulfillment of the mission, with the divine mandate to save those lost for God's kingdom. Do you help or impede your husband's fulfillment of the mission?

Ellen white helps us with this response: "The wife of a minister of the gospel can be either a most successful helper and a great blessing to her husband or a hindrance to him in his work. It depends very much on the wife whether a minister will rise from day to day in his sphere of usefulness, or whether he will sink to the ordinary level". (The Adventist Home, p. 355).

Your first responsibility is to yourself: Strive to maintain an intimate relationship with your Savior. Then, as a natural result you can influence others to salvation and be a blessing

to the ministry of your husband. If you do not live in holiness this will be "the greatest curse that a minister can have". (The Adventist Home, p. 355).

Believe me when I say that this will create obstacles for the mission of the church.

The pastor's wife would do good to have ever present the following advice: "She should never urge her wishes and desires, or express a lack of interest in her husband's labor, or dwell upon homesick, discontented feelings. All these natural feelings must be overcome. She should have a purpose in life which should be unfalteringly carried out. What if this conflicts with the feelings, and pleasures, and natural tastes? These should be cheerfully and readily sacrificed in order to do good and save souls". (Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 1, p. 452). Remember that you are the pastor's wife, not a pastor. However, you have a mission to accomplish as an individual, alongside your husband, in the church, and the community. May God help you fulfill the mission of seeing people attain redemption for all eternity, especially your family.

Teófilo A. Silvestre, DMin. Executive Secretary and Ministerial, Dominican Union.

SIEMA Social

Central Mexican Union

How pleasant that each of the Shepherdess groups that make up the Central Mexican Union could meet! The moments of prayer and reflection that we experienced during the sessions, were a profound inspiration and produced an unparalleled harmony. Given the enormous missional challenge that Mexico City, one of the most populated cities of the world, poses, God has made evident His favor upon us. Let us pray for the pastoral families. Special thanks to the administrators of the different regions for making this meeting possible. May His divine hands continue to showering you with His blessings.



Chiapas Mexican Union

Despite being a small union, due to the fact that it is made up of just one of the states of the Mexican Republic, the Chiapas Union is great because of its growth in the church. During our wonderful meetings with each chapter of Shepherdess the Lord showed His care towards our sisters, with whom we shared presentations from the third module of the Continuing Education program. We yearn for the Lord to continue guiding your ministry and protecting your marriage so that you may be a living testimony for your churches. Blessings, sisters from the Chiapas Mexican Union! Special thanks to your Coordinator, Sara de Navarro, for such pleasant and unforgettable experiences.



Western Venezuelan Union

We are profoundly grateful to God for allowing the opportunity for all the pastor's wives of the Western Venezuelan Union to gather together. God was good! Near and far He protected our sisters and we were able to meet together and experience moments of camaraderie, but above all else, meditation and an encounter with God. You are in our prayers, our Venezuelan friends! God bless you! Special thanks to the administration for the support you provided for this activity. Thanks to Milder de Palacio, Union SIEMA Coordinator.



Northern Colombian Union

The office of the Union overflowed with activities each and every one of the days that our sisters in Christ met and shared the wonders that the Lord has done in their lives. The moments of prayer and praise in which God, without a doubt, touched hearts, were of great blessing.

Thanks be to God for His loving care, for the moments of meditation and for reaffirming the call of each pastor's wife. We will continue to pray that God keep filling you with His Spirit! Special thanks to the Coordinator, Sara de Redondo, for the time you invested and the warmth of your attentiveness.





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SEGMENTS

Him and I (900-1200 words) Spiritual article. Share a challenge that you have faced in which you were victorious by holding God's hand and inspire others with your testimony, to overcome a difficult time.

Shrieks of Laughter (150-200 words) Humorous section. Share an experience that made you laugh out loud. There is nothing better than laughing. It may be something that happened at church, at home with your children, or a situation that you were present.

Between Us (600-700 words) Share practical tips that have helped you get out of an uncomfortable situation. Example: How to deal with that slippery "sister" of the church, the best way to avoid misunderstandings, how to deal with uncomfortable comparisons with the other pastor's wives, etc.

What a good idea! (300-400) Have you developed a technique to obtain better results in: volunteers participation, collection of funds, connections with the community, clubs, etc.?

Note: If your article is chosen to be published you will be notified via e-mail. All the articles will be reviewed by the editor who will modify it if necessary.